

**PROPOSAL 272 – 5 AAC 01.270. Lawful gear and gear specifications and operation and 5 AAC 07.365. Kuskokwim River Salmon Management Plan.** Provide the Commissioner of the Alaska Department of Fish and Game emergency order authority to restrict gillnet length and other allowable gear during times necessary to conserve king salmon in the Kuskokwim River drainage, as follows:

5 AAC 01.270(n) is amended to read:

**5 AAC 01.270. Lawful gear and gear specifications and operation.**

(n) Notwithstanding (b) and (j) of this section, during times when the commissioner determines it to be necessary for the conservation of king salmon, the commissioner, by emergency order, may close the fishing season in any portion of the Kuskokwim Area and immediately reopen the season in that portion during which **one or more of** the following gear limitations **may be implemented** [APPLY]:

(1) **for gillnets:**

**(A) a gillnet mesh size may not exceed six inches;**

**(B) a gillnet mesh size may not exceed four inches;**

**(C) a gillnet may not exceed the length specified by the commissioner in the emergency order, except that a longer gillnet may be used if no more than the specified length of the gillnet is in a fishing condition and the remainder of the gillnet is tied up or secured so that it is not in the water in a fishing condition;**

(2) for fish wheels:

(A) a fish wheel used to take fish must be equipped with a livebox that is constructed so that it contains no less than 45 cubic feet of water volume while it is in operation;

(B) the livebox of a fish wheel must be checked at least once every six hours while the fish wheel is in operation, and all king salmon in the livebox must be returned alive to the water;

(3) for beach seine gear: any king salmon taken in beach seine gear must be **released immediately and returned to the water unharmed** [RETURNED ALIVE TO THE WATER];

**(4) for dip nets: a person may fish for salmon with a dip net, as defined in 5 AAC 39.105, and all king salmon caught in a dip net must be released immediately and returned to the water unharmed.**

5 AAC 07.365(d)(2) is repealed and readopted to read:

**5 AAC 07.365. Kuskokwim River Salmon Management Plan.**

(d) In the subsistence fishery, in the Kuskokwim River drainage, in the waters of the mainstem of the river and other salmon spawning tributaries, unless otherwise specified by the department,

...

(2) the commissioner may implement one or more of the gear limitations as described in 5 AAC 01.270(n) during times the commissioner determines it to be necessary for the conservation of king salmon;

**What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?** At the October 2014 work session, the Alaska Board of Fisheries adopted Agenda Change Request (ACR) 8 regarding the Kuskokwim River king salmon subsistence fishery. The Alaska Board of Fisheries focused this ACR on potential regulatory actions that could be implemented during the 2015 fishing season to address changes to subsistence gear specifications to provide for conservation of Kuskokwim River king salmon, which are declining in abundance. This draft regulatory language would provide the department with additional management flexibility to implement a suite of gear specification options for the purpose of reducing king salmon harvest during various portions of the run. The proposed regulatory changes provide the department with emergency order authority to restrict gillnet gear length while specifying allowable gillnet mesh size, and to allow a combination of shorter gillnets, fishwheels, and dipnets, or restrict to only one gear type. In combination with the department's discretionary time and area authority, the additional flexibility provided by these regulatory changes would enhance the department's ability to conserve king salmon while providing subsistence harvest opportunity.

**PROPOSED BY:** Proposal 272 represents an Alaska Board of Fisheries modification of ACR 8  
(formerly ACR 8)

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